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ABSTRACT

Equal opportunities programs in the Member States of the European Community (EC) are based on international law, EC law, and various legal provisions at the national level. Two main types of positive action can be identified among the various initiatives implemented in the different Member States: (1) governmental promotion of positive actions through legislation and agencies; and (2) creation of an infrastructure. Companies surveyed stress the importance of continuing vocational training for personnel, but the vast majority of trainees are men. Companies can be grouped into three types depending on their personnel and equal opportunities policies: (1) firms that follow recommendations and national legislation; (2) companies with no specific positive action program that apply the principle as a company, organizational, and personnel policy; and (3) companies that develop and implement a positive action program. The players involved have varying importance in terms of their tasks, strategies, and negotiating capacity; key protagonists are the company, women, promoters, and support mechanisms of the positive action. Training programs can be classified as insertion; retraining or reskilling; and promotion, development, and preparation for management. The effects produced by the positive actions are more training for women, a new sense of legitimacy for equal opportunities policy, and increased occupational visibility for women. (Appendixes include evaluation guidelines, 15 references, and a list of companies visited.) (YLB)

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CEDEFOP Document

Equal opportunities and vocational training

Evaluation of in-company vocational training schemes for women

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

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Equal opportunities and vocational training
Evaluation of in-company vocational training for women
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June 1991

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INTRODUCTION

1. THE PURPOSE OF STUDY

CEDEFOP has been implementing equal opportunities and vocational training actions for many years. The following report constitutes a summary of a long-term period evaluation process, commenced in 1989 upon the initiative of Maria Pierret.

The objective of this evaluation processwas to collect information on the effectiveness of positive training actions implemented in various companies. In 1989, a preliminary case study was conducted in four Member States of the European Community, France, Italy, Portugal and Spain, by ISFOL (Rome). Various firms were visited in each country. In the light of the results of this study, it was decided to continue the research by conducting similar studies in eight European countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom). The purpose of this second stage was to examine a number of positive actions in each Member State in order to evaluate their impact, not only on the situation and integration of women within the company, but also on the organization and functioning of the firm itself. Common evaluation guidelines (see Annex 1) were drawn up in the course of two meetings of the evaluators involved in these activities. With the exception of the Dutch report, all the evaluation reports were available by June 1990 (see the list in Annex 2). A third summary phase was then proposed to ensure useful dissemination of the

information contained in the evaluation reports.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology used by the experts to carry out this evaluation was a survey conducted on the basis of an evaluation guide, specifying the type of information to be collected and the efficiency indicators to be applied in order to assess the impact of the training schemes.

The information collected was therefore structured under four headings:

- description of the firm;
- description of the training scheme for women;
- impact of the training scheme;
- evaluation of analytical data.

Although the type of information to be collected was specified from the outset, selection of the instruments used to obtain this information (questionnaires, interviews, analyses of documentation, etc.) was left to the discretion of the experts.

The persons contacted within the firms were as follows:

- managerial staff involved in the positive training action (personnel manager, equal opportunities officer, training manager);
- trainers;

- trade union and workforce representatives;
- the women trained or being trained;
- male colleagues;
- female colleagues.

On the basis of a preliminary description, the experts were in most cases able to put forward a certain number of hypotheses on the influence of contextual variables (relating to the national or company context) on the design, implementation and impact of positive actions in the field of vocational training.

3. LIMITS OF THE STUDY

The following three limits to this study should be specified:

Limit no. 1

The selected actions are neither exhaustive nor representative.

This study is based on case analyses representing an absolutely arbitrary choice on the part of the evaluators.

Limit no. 2

The qualitative character of the data and the importance of interpretation of the facts.

The evaluation process involved above all qualitative data. This factor explains the hypothetical character of the analyses which have been neither confirmed nor invalidated by significant sets of figures.

Limit no. 3

The point of evaluation in the implementation process of the positive training action.

In most cases the study examined training actions in the experimental phase; appraisal of the impact of such actions on the clients and companies concerned was therefore extremely complex.

4. PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT

The following report comprises five chapters:
Chapter I examines the nature and characteristics of equal opportunities programmes in the various Member States and firms.
Chapter II analyses the role of the players involved in the implementation of positive actions.
Chapter III presents a description of the various training programmes implemented.
Chapter IV is an attempt to evaluate the impact of the training schemes on the organizations and the women involved on the basis of working hypotheses.
Finally, Chapter V discusses the various issues raised in the previous chapters.

CHAPTER I
THE CONTEXT

1. THE GENERAL CONTEXT

Under international law, positive actions are based on Art. 4 of the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, which was adopted by the United Nations in 1979 and came into effect in 1981. This article stipulates that the adoption by the contracting states of special temporary measures with the aim of accelerating the establishment of genuine equality between men and women is not to be considered as an act of discrimination as defined by the Convention, but should under no circumstances lead to the maintenance of unequal or distinct standards and that such measures should be revoked once the objectives in terms of equal opportunity and treatment have been achieved.

Under Community law, positive actions are based on Art. 2, par. 4 of the Council Directive of 9 February 1976 on the "implemention of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions".

The contents of this Directive are to be transposed by the Member States of the European Community into national legislation according to the specific arrangements envisaged by the corresponding national legal systems. The directive was followed up by Commission action programmes (1980-1985 and 1985-1990), calling upon Member States to develop positive actions in the context of employment in firms established on their territory.

The various legal provisions at national level encourage firms to:

- organize more specifically targeted recruitment to attract women;
- employ the under-represented sex - a criterion often used to take on a higher number of women;
- introduce women-only training schemes to offer women training in certain fields of employment (technicians, managers, etc.) or traditionally male sectors;
- develop equal opportunities plans covering recruitment, employment, promotion, training, salaries and other working conditions, including flexible working time, child-care, career breaks, parental leave, etc.

As far as education/guidance and training institutions are concerned, national legislation opens up possibilities of:

- developing women-only education, guidance and training programmes. These programmes take account of the social integration of women and the subsequent advantages and disadvantages in the traditionally male-dominated culture of the working world;
- developing a pedagogical methodology to genuinely encourage women to penetrate into training fields hitherto dominated by men;
- emphasizing the importance of women trainers in

certain career options;

- training teachers/trainers of both sexes to tackle the problems of women in the course of training;
- developing vocational and personal guidance to promote the occupational mobility of women and the diversification of educational and training choice.

The initiatives implemented in the different Member States vary considerably. The following are some significant examples of these national variations highlighted by analysis of the evaluation reports:

- French legislation of 1983 allows firms to negotiate and implement equal opportunities programmes, in some cases with the financial assistance of the state. A firm or an organization may adopt a programme and the initiatives applied to recruitment, promotion, training, salaries or working conditions and organization. This programme is negotiated and accepted by the social partners - representatives of the staff and the management - within the firm. Training has been the predominant feature of equal opportunities programmes implemented in France to date;

- In Belgium, the firms are informed through official channels of the possibility of signing

on the diversification of women's of educational, training and educational choice, e.g. "women in atypical fields of employment", launched all over Europe.

These few examples indicate a number of important contextual variables in the characteristics of positive actions:

- the presence of back-up legislation (France, United Kingdom);
- the existence of national agencies with the task of developing equal opportunities policies (Denmark, France, Italy, Spain);
- the presence of public agencies or professional associations involved in the promotion of employment (Belgium, United Kingdom);
- the presence of a decentralized network of equal opportunities officers (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, etc.);
- the promotional role of trade unions (Italy).

Over and above the presence or absence of these variables, two main types of positive action can be discerned from the contextual point of view:

- those which can be found within a context of the development of the promotion of positive actions, thanks to the presence of legislation and agencies promoting equal opportunities

an agreement on an equal opportunities programme. The government offers the companies professional support free of charge to draw up and implement this programme. Although some have concentrated on training and others have been broader in content, the promotion of the female workforce is an essential feature of the majority of these programmes;

- In other Member States, the creation of an infrastructure is the basic element of equal opportunities policy. Various models have been developed in the course of the years. The Danish model introduced an equal opportunities counsellor at management and board of directors level. The British model also establishes an equal opportunities unit, often close to personnel administration. The Italian model is a combination of the two, often linked to a trade union. In some EC Member States, the public sector has developed a wide range of activities in the wake of the UN declaration at the second Women's Conference in 1985. Many large-scale public "enterprises" have created equal opportunities officer posts;

- The role of the social partners is more or less "active" in the various Member States. In some cases, the social partners have been the advocates and often the promoters of campaigns

policy (Denmark, France, Spain, United Kingdom);

- those implemented by ad hoc players (firms, unions, associations) in a national context characterized by the absence of a back-up policy (Greece, Italy).

The impact of these various contexts on the actions shall be discussed later. Let us first of all turn to the characteristics of the firms in which these actions were developed.

2. THE FIRMS

2.1. Brief description

Twenty-four firms participated in this study.

Fourteen sectors of industry were represented: car mechanics, electronics/electrical engineering, transport, iron and metalworking, machining, food production, pharmaceutics, aerospatial technology, the petrochemical industry, the public sector, telecommunications, generation/distribution of electricity and textiles. Eighteen of the firms were from the private and five from the public sector; one was semi-private. Five of the companies had a staff complement of 1 - 300, four had 300 - 1 000 employees and thirteen of the firms had a work-force of 1 000 - 60 000. Expressed in terms of the traditional segregation between female and male workers, the female workforce ranged from 3 % - 73 %.

A more detailed description of all the firms visited can be found in Annex 3.

2.2. Development constraints and strategies

All the firms visited are currently faced with the following three constraints to a varying degree:

- sharper competition in the various sectors;
- a shortage of skilled personnel;
- a lack of flexibility in work organization and the use of new technologies.

The firms are trying to develop remedial strategies to confront these constraints which may be focused on:

- products:
  - quality upgrading;
  - development of new products;
  - specialization of production;

- work organization:
  - creation of independent teams;
  - work process modernization;
  - robotization/utilization of new technologies;
  - management and team organization diversification;
  - enrichment of repetitive jobs;
  - development and utilization of women's resources;

- creation of working conditions of particular appeal to women: flexible working hours, child-care facilities, career plans;

- recruitment:
  - development of the firm's image to attract skilled workers;
  - recruitment of women as unskilled and semi-skilled personnel;

- personnel training:
  - development of a training policy and an implementation programme for in-company personnel;
  - training of unskilled female personnel;
  - training of women to management and higher technical levels;
  - continuity of training schemes;
  - training in flexibility, job rotation, management and personal development.

As can be observed, most, if not all of these strategies may be of specific interest to women. However let us now turn to the role actually attributed to women in the training policy of these firms.

2.3. Continuing training policy

All the companies stress the importance of the continuing vocational training of their personnel and maintain that

they have defined a training policy. Some of the firms (the largest) have their own facilities and trainers. In Denmark, e.g., one of the companies offers each new employee two weeks of training, followed by a week in the second year of service for unskilled personnel. The latter also have the opportunity of following two years of general and vocational training, combined with a salary increment. Continuing training is also provided at management level. This right to training offers each member of the workforce the opportunity of acquiring a qualification for other jobs, either during working hours or leisure time, with the costs reimbursed.

The smallest firms use the local training network. They generally have a sufficient workforce capacity to cover the positions left vacant by trainees in the course of training.

Despite this increasing importance of training, it must nevertheless be pointed out that the vast majority of trainees are men. Most firms have no long-term training policy specifically catering for women. Women are generally included in very specific and narrowly circumscribed projects, even in cases in which the firms in question have adopted an equal opportunities or positive action programme.

3. THE PERSONNEL AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICIES OF THE COMPANIES

Analysis of the evaluation reports highlighted three types of company, depending on whether or not they have opted for an equal opportunities or a positive action programme.

A. Firms which follow recommendations and national legislation on equal opportunities, but do not specifically apply an equal opportunities or positive action programme of their own.

Examples of this type of company can be found in Denmark and Spain.

In Denmark, one of the companies follows a personnel policy which supports the right of each employee to training, flexible working hours, child-care facilities and extended parental leave. The firm's general attitude is that each employee, male or female, has the right to self-development at the workplace. It nevertheless has no action programme to solve the problem of the "double day" and few women are to be found in managerial posts. The company launched its positive action merely because a study had shown that the administrative personnel were dissatisfied with the lack of promotion opportunities and the under-utilization of their resources.

In Spain, the company in question follows the general policy of Spanish equal opportunities legislation. The

quality control training programme was aimed at decentralizing working operations and responsibilities; the relevant jobs were already occupied by the women receiving training.

B. Companies with no specific positive action programme, but which apply the principle of equal opportunities as a company, organizational and personnel policy.

In the United Kingdom, one of the firms has adopted an equal opportunities policy within the framework of a collective agreement without a positive action programme. The firm has no equal opportunities counsellor. It endeavours to inform the entire personnel of its policy and attempts to solve the problem of the gaps in the workforce by channelling its efforts towards an improvement of working conditions for women and motivating the female workforce.

Another company, again in the United Kingdom, has no positive action programme, but applies the recommendations of an initial report on equal opportunities. Several departments have an equal opportunities officer. The emphasis is on the establishment of activities rendering women's working conditions more appealing and to encourage them to return to their jobs after an extensive career break.

C. Companies which develop a positive action programme,

implemented with the assistance of an internal or external support mechanisms with the human and economic resources to integrate these actions into company strategy and organization.

In a large-scale Danish company, an equal opportunities counsellor is responsible for the design and implementation of this plan. The managing director and the board of directors are also responsible for equal opportunities policy. The target is a 10%+ quota of women managers by 1991; the firm therefore offers a management course for women and provides crèches open around the clock for parents working on a rotating basis.

In a final example from the United Kingdom, the firm follows an official equal opportunities policy and also applies a written agreement; two full-time employees in the employment policy department and various equal opportunities officers within the local services are responsible for their implementation.

The positive action programme is comprised of the following actions:

- monitoring of the recruitment structure to evaluate over- and under-representation at all levels;
- women-only schemes, management development courses and a whole range of training courses;
- local initiatives to encourage women to go in for engineering jobs.

One conclusion which applies to all these situations is that even if the diversification of women's situations in education/training and their opportunities on the job market are constantly increasing, expectations and traditions always assume that women subordinate their occupational lives to their family responsibilites.

Thus almost all the firms offer the possibility of part-time work. Part-time may mean a reduced working day, alternate weeks at work and at home or any other feasible system. Flexible working hours mean flexibility in daily working hours or working hours spread over three weeks or the weekend, with the rest of the week free or working on a rotating basis, etc. Many variations are developing. Job-sharing is another form of reducing working hours. Some companies offer the possibility of career breaks of a minimum of one year and a maximum of five years, with a guarantee of a return to work at the same level. Others offer extended maternity leave, which may be up to 18 months beyond the 40 weeks envisaged by the law. Although reduced or flexible working hours are open to both sexes, the majority of part-time workers are women.

Opportunities are much more restricted when it comes to child-care facilities. Only four of the twenty-two companies offer such facilities, e.g. crèche or kindergardens. One company offers holiday camps and nannies in cases of illness, another provides round-the-clock child-care for the parents working on a rotating basis.

CHAPTER II
THE PLAYERS

INTRODUCTION

Having examined the political and organizational context of the firms, for a better understanding of the development of the positive actions, we shall now explore the logic and roles of the players involved.

In general terms, the following players may be involved:

- the firm;
- representatives of national and/or regional public institutions;
- trade unions;
- trainers;
- internal and/or external support mechanisms;
- women;
- consultancy firms;
- training agencies;
- company management;
- company personnel.

Each of these players is of varying importance in terms of their tasks, strategies and negotiating capacity. Moreover, their intervention may take place at different stages of the process. Whereas some have an indispensable function for the implementation of the positive action, others play a fundamental role in its development and others yet again are necessary for the global success of the operation.

Analysis of the evaluation reports would seem to show that three of these players are key protagonists within the system: the company, the women, the promoters and/or the internal and external support mechanisms of the positive action.

Nevertheless, as shall be emphasized later, according to the context within which the action is developed, other players end up playing a more or less strategic role (representatives of public institutions, trade unions, company management, training agencies). Moreover, the distribution of the players involved in the different types of network, as well as their strategic role and weight are probably affected by the actual type of positive action under way.

For the purposes of this report, two types of positive action should be differentiated, distinct both in theory and in terms of their time frame:

a) positive actions catering for "weak" female occupational segments, aimed at reducing discrimination by the application of legislative and training instruments, negotiation and/or concertation with the institutions and/or trade unions;

b) positive actions of a promotional type catering for occupational segments which are potentially upper-middle level, principally implemented by the

company and tending to upgrade human - in particular female - resources.

Let us now examine the role of each of this key players within the limits of these two definitions.

1. THE MAIN PLAYERS

1.1. The firm

The role played by the firms in the development of equal opportunities must be regarded as a process which, having started off in a number of industrial sectors at a time of technological restructuring, primarily involved the lower middle classes of the working world. The predominant perspective was to reskill workers to perform typically masculine technical tasks. This approach, the overriding aim of which was to prevent the elimination of lesser-skilled women's jobs, permitted confrontation of the patterns of segregation resulting from the predominant Tayloristic and sexist organizational culture.

This first type of action quite definitely comprises a commitment of the firm vis-à-vis its external milieu (the social responsibilities of the company) and the opening of negotiations and exchange with certain institutional players at external (regional delegates, trade unions, etc.) and internal (unions, women) levels; however it neither triggered nor constitued a global transformation of the firm at organizational, productive and cultural

levels.

The company liaised with the unions, using a series of economic opportunities at national or European level. By recognizing female segregation, it established an operation limited to a specific sector or group of women, thus preventing any impact, even of a merely informal nature, on company organization and management.

In the course of the 1980s, in particular within certain medium-sized and large-scale enterprises, a change emerged: technological and organizational restructuring acquired a key role as a result of sharper competition. Human resources thus became an essential element of company strategy.

The demand for a flexible structure, attentive to market changes, in fact called for flexibile, innovative and creative personnel, with an upper-middle basic culture, capable of being upgraded by continuing training.

This framework therefore seemed favourable to the female human resources of the 1980s, who generally possessed a high cultural level, creativity and an eye for product quality. This situation was especially propitious in that it followed on from structural phenomena such as a fall in the birthrate, a shortage of skilled technical personnel and a disinclination towards certain kinds of technical work.

In this situation, positive action, chiefly promoted by the enterprise, tended to develop feminine resources and their "managerial" skills, involving the global structure of the organization and its careful negotiation with in-company unions.

During this phase, attention to the question of women's careers also turned towards tertiary sectors, often impervious to change (e.g. banking), and even reached public structures with a relatively high proportion of female employees, but nevertheless characterized by an evident segregation of careers for women.

Accordingly - within the framework of this approach - equal opportunities policy may be perceived as the signal of a global transformation of profound corporate culture.

1.2. The women

Women should be the key players of any equal opportunities policy. In reality, especially in the initial phase in which the actions are defined and launched, women have little opportunity of control and limited negotiating powers vis-à-vis the promoters of the intervention. Women being brushed aside in this way may lead to the failure of the entire operation. In fact, women often tend to reject a training scheme imposed on them and which they have not accepted (Ireland) or refuse to tolerate the disadvantages of a long-term training programme which does not seem to change their working activities (France).

In contrast, information and preliminary information actions with a view to remotivating women and giving them confidence in their own abilities will guarantee a greater degree of success of the training action (France). Moreover, involvement of women in the evaluation of the action and its possible modification leads to a high degree of motivation which tends to have a "spill-over" effect on the entire female workforce. Secondly, following the training action, phases are observed in which women become the vectors of change. The action may then lead to an effective improvement of their occupational, contextual and relational conditions and also determine a process of self-development and a gradual overall change of corporate culture. On the other hand, if no improvement occurs, the result may be occupational demotivation and a more or less latent degree of "conflictuality".

1.3. Promoters and internal and/or external support mechanisms

All too often, the role of the promoters or the internal and/or external support mechanisms is not given sufficient scope in the analysis of the success of positive actions.

The promoters may be players situated within the institutions, with more or less central roles and tasks which are clearly defined by statute (regional delegates in France, INEM representatives in Spain or social workers in Belgium). They may also be social players at union and political level, social movements (women's organizations

or associations) or persons acting as inter-organizational relays at local or Community level (e.g. the EEC counsellor in Ireland). These promoters intervene above all in the promotional and launching phase of the positive action. They permit the establishment of formal and informal networks for the development of an equal opportunities policy and often ensure the legitimation and "guarantee" of product quality.

The role of internal support mechanisms acquires an increasing importance in the programme implementation phase. These support mechanisms are generally integrated at the highest levels of organizations, in "equal opportunities" committees which follow the training structures and the women being trained, on the one hand, and participate in intermediary evaluation phases, on the other. They then permit the possible introduction of adaptations better suited to the needs of the women and the objectives of the firm. Sometimes the promoting and support roles are assumed by the same person, which permits an acceleration of the implementation process of the programmes in the external and internal social environment of the companies. It is thanks to them that internal ogranizational resistance or possible conflicts of authority may be circumvented.

Observation of these players shows that those most involved in the implementation process often had links with national and/or European authorities or with groups of equal opportunities experts. The determining role of

these players is not so much related to their identity as to their function as a "broker" between their firm and the political sphere in which they are developing or have developed. In their firm, they are upgraded professionally by their political relations. Vis-à-vis the public authorities, they ensure the political enhancement of their project by the links they are able to offer with the enterprise. This privileged supportive and promoting position does not fail to leave its mark on their capacity to "sell" and convince the directors of the organizations to adopt the approach in question. The probability of these players being heard is even greater in cases in which the organization in question is confronted with the urgent need to target women, either because they constitute one of the elements of constraint to be managed in a socio-technical context of modernization, or because they represent one of the vectors of the strategy of the organizations.

2. OTHER PLAYERS

2.1. Representatives of national and/or regional public institutions

In the course of the past decade, the majority of the Member States of the European Community have established national and local agencies with the task of implementing equal opportunities provisions on the basis of EEC guidelines and directives. Although these agencies have been set up in various legislative, institutional and

political contexts with different tasks and operational frameworks, they nevertheless share a common objective: to promote and, if possible, finance actions with the aim of surmounting the barriers preventing the full realization of equality between men and women.

These agencies at central level seem to have played a more determining role than what we have defined in this context as "first generation positive actions". In the second phase, when awareness of the importance of female resources begins to become widespread at entrepreneurial, union and social levels, the function of these players, although remaining important, tends to change into that of a "watchdog". The operational and "propositional" role is then assumed by institutional players, delegates at local level (equal opportunities counsellors, social workers, officials from regional institutions, etc.) and in some cases by other players involved in the inter-organizational network (company, union, support, consultants, training companies).

2.2. Trade unions

The role of trade unions is closely linked to the status and nature of social relations within the firms, which are highly dependent on the position of the trade unions in the various Member States of the EEC. In some cases, trade unions have played an active and recognized role, above all in certain development and implementation phases of national equal opportunities policies, by supporting the action of the firms or other institution agents.

At the level of the firm, the union's position and options vis-à-vis positive actions can nevertheless not be classified homogeneously; these elements depend on a series of fplayers, ranging from the rate of unionization of the workforce to the type of in-company industrial relations. The following transitions may be envisaged:

- a favourable position in which the union shows so much interest in the initiative that it is publicized in union journals (e.g. in the United Kingdom)...
- ... leading to collaboration...
- ... or indifference...
- ... which may go as far as the manifestation of actual hostility towards equal opportunities policy.

In general, during the first phase of positive actions, a position of consensus, or at least the absence of hostility among trade unions, seems to be an important condition for the introduction of the intervention; however the presence of trade unions is not necessarily considered indispensable for the process, control or adaptation of the action in question.

In contrast, the Italian case presents a number of essential characteristics on the value of trade unions as players in the promotion and development of positive actions. In the absence of parity legislation, the launching of a positive action, its negotiation and its positive outcome were the consequence of a combination of

the wishes of the firms and the encouragement and promotion of the unions, sparking off a change in industrial relations.

As far as the second type of positive action is concerned, the conclusion which it seems can definitely be drawn is the need for the real involvement of union representatives in the framework of a system of industrial relations, characterized by a high level of negotiation. In this context of new industrial relations, it is possible to define the scenarios for the interactions and the modalities of action between the trade union, the institutions, the firms and the women. An hypothesis which could in fact be put forward is the integration of this question into the framework of normal union negotiation, thanks to the introduction of new standards for labour contracts... to the application of standards which already exist in national legislation... to actions aimed at eliminating apparent and limited manifestations of discrimination (segregation at the workplace, under-representation of women at management level, etc.), against which first-generation positive actions have been effectively deployed.

Larger-scale actions involving various players (both inside and outside the firm), aiming at a change in corporate culture, require long-term intervention and flexible structures which can be modified in the course of time, comprising, among others, the direct and active involvement of the trade union as a player in the

promotion, development and success of an effective equal opportunities policy.

2.3. Training and consultancy institutions

Various roles can be attributed to the training and consultancy institutions involved in positive actions. They may, e.g., have played a promotional role in the launching of an equal opportunities policy involving various players or may have played a more limited role in cases in which the firm was the driving force.

In cases in which the network utilized envisages a number of partners for a negotiated exchange of resources, their function may also be restricted to guiding or monitoring the action.

Their function and role seem to grow, the more the action is monitored by external or internal groups and the more the scheme tends to encourage the critical capacity of the trained women. Although the power of negotation and exchange of training and counselling institutes appears limited as a whole, it nevertheless has a central function in the success of the intervention.

2.4. Company management and employees

Company management and employees are not necessarily directly involved in the preparation and planning of the training action. They may nevertheless become elements of

success, delay or failure if they are not sufficiently motivated or informed about the contents and objectives of the training action.

This is particularly true of top and middle management. Their involvement may generally be due to ad hoc information on the purposes of the operation, adequate training with respect to equal opportunities problems and human resource management or, alternatively, to their direct involvement in management, monitoring or evaluation committees. They constitute a key element for the application of training actions within the company.

The participation of certain managerial levels, assuming teaching or tutor functions, also seems to facilitate the acceptance of the positive action and the integration of trained women into the work teams. If the intermediary or managerial levels are disinterested in equal opportunities policy, they will finally conduct actions which will disturb or boycott such a policy or create a hostile and conflictual climate which may act as an obstacle to new working modalities and the development of female professionalism.

Similarly, the conscious participation of the male and female workforce not directly involved in the training action may also constitute a factorr of success. It is in fact obvious that the operations under consideration require an occupational transformation of certain productive levels, a change in motivation or career plans

for given female sub-groups. This process comprises an overall de facto transformation of the social reference values of the company, which will finally turn the tables of the complex machinery of dependences and opportunities developed by the companies. This is of course a long-term change which can only come about if all the players comprising corporate culture are kept abreast of and involved in the process.

CHAPTER III

TRAINING PROGRAMMES

INTRODUCTION

Training programmes organized in the context of so-called "positive actions" vary considerablely, not only from one country to another, but even within the same Member State. The various actions differ in their objectives, duration, organization, target group sizes, etc.

It has nevertheless been possible to classify the actions examined as follows:

- training programmes aimed at the vocational INSERTION of young women or women job-seekers;
- training programmes in the field of RETRAINING or RESKILLING;
- training programmes in the field of PROMOTION, DEVELOPMENT and PREPARATION for MANAGEMENT functions.

1. INSERTION PROGRAMMES

INSERTION programmes cater for two types of target group:

- young women aged 16-21;
- unemployed women of any age.

1.1. Insertion of young women

These training actions can be found in Germany and Belgium.

The following two German programmes were examined:

- a training programme for female technicians in industrial electronics, aviation mechanics, the construction of flight instruments, assembly of synthetic materials, etc.;
- a programme promoting the access of young women to technical and commercial occupations.

The Belgian training programmes were as follows:

- training programmes for multi-skilled transport and handling staff and assembly and production operatives in corresponding departments.

a) General characteristics

All these training programmes catered for young women aged 16-21 in the apprentice-type stream of vocational education/training (Berufsbildung in Germany, apprentissage industriel in Belgium). An officially recognized skilled worker diploma is obtained at the end of this educational route. These training programmes therefore present the traditional characteristics of apprenticeship, i.e.: a length of 2-3 1/2 years (determined by legislation in each country), a contract of employment for the apprentices and alternance between the educational and the work setting, the units varying from one situation to another (every second week, three days out of six, three days out of four, etc.).

Similarly, since these training programmes are

apprenticeship schemes, they are mixed. They are termed positive actions because of the wish expressed by the organizers to gradually increase the number of young women recruited in traditionally male sectors.

In Germany, e.g., evaluation reports show the following increases:

- from 1-2 % in 1978 to 5 % in 1985;
- from 4.8 % in 1985 to 10 % in 1990.

Although such figures are not available for Belgium, it can be stated that the number of young women affected by in-company positive actions is insignificant (6, 6, 5) and still much lower than the number of young men participating in such schemes.

Finally, funding may either be from public (Ministry of Education) or private (training contracts with the firms) sources.

b) Training objectives

The declared aims of these programmes are clearly linked to the aim of counteracting a shortage of skilled labour by training young women in traditionally male jobs. In Belgium, it seems that the firms see this as an interesting opportunity to improve their image in the eyes of the public authorities and financial sponsors.

c) Training programme implementation and players

In Germany, the origins of the actions can be traced back to political programmes and feminist campaigns. The aim of integrating more women into "male" apprenticeships has been the subject of a large-scale publicity campaign. Nevertheless, it seems that the young women have had to adapt to the existing system since no measure appears to have been intended to offer them specific reception structures.

The training teams are therefore the same as in mainstream apprenticeships, i.e. essentially composed of men in the case of technical training programmes. In Belgium, these actions are integrated into the framework of European programmes (Social Fund and the PETRA programme). The projects in question are submitted and coordinated by the training institution of the federation of metalworking enterprises. To support and stimulate the projects, this institute earmarks an annual sum of 200 000 Belgian francs for each young woman receiving training. As in Germany, company trainers are virtually all men. A woman was nevertheless to be taken on as from September 1990. It should also be pointed out that coordination functions (both in the institute and the firms) are carried out by women (in particular social workers).

d) Recruitment of young women

In the context of all these actions, awareness-raising,

information and introductory campaigns were organized to stimulate interest in the programmes among firms, parents and young women. It should nevertheless be pointed out that not all young women are accepted for the programmes. Selection interviews are conducted, during which they are expected to manifest their "motivation", "dynamism", "knowledge of the world of industry" and their "ability to impose themselves in a man's world". It would be interesting to find out whether the same selection procedure is applied to young men applying for these training programmes!

e) Results

In Germany, the results seem very positive since 80 % finished the training programme, 98 % of them successfully. In Belgium, the training programmes were not yet concluded at the time of the survey so that no information can be given on the subject. It should nevertheless be pointed out that in two companies out of three, two girls out of six have given up the course and opted for a different occupational choice.

1.2. Insertion of job-seekers

In two cases, the training programmes were primarily targeted towards women job-seekers:

- in Denmark: a training programme for CNC operatives;

- in Greece: a training programme for women bus-drivers.

a) General characteristics

As in the previous cases, the training programmes involved traditionally masculine jobs. The women concerned (14 in Denmark, 100 in Greece) had a relatively low level of previous training. The programmes are relatively long (47/11 weeks) and are carried out in the form of alternance, with in-company training sandwiched between classes at a public training agency (school or training centre). An original approach has been developed in Denmark, where women job-seekers stand in for company staff while they attend school, this method of organization thus offering the young women a work experience opportunity.

These training programmes are exclusively reserved for women. They lead to a recognized certificate and are jointly funded by the public authorities and industry.

b) Training objectives

The objectives mentioned include offering women access to new skills. In Greece, emphasis is made of the wish to change women's image among women themselves, their colleagues and the public at large.

In both cases, however, the training programmes involved

training before recruitment and as far as the bus-drivers are concerned, it is interesting to note that the women were the first to receive training prior to recruitment since the management had previously not considered it necessary to provide training for men.

c) Training programme implementation and players

In both cases, the courses stemmed from the initiative and policy of the public authorities. In Denmark, the local employment service was behind the action. In Greece the evaluation report highlights the role of the measures implemented by the government to promote equal opportunities within the public transport service, whose general assembly is attended by the Ministers of Finance, the Environment, Public Works, Transport and Communications.

Again in Greece, despite the strong representation of men the a training team, women trainers were nevertheless available for 80 out of a total of 330 hours. In Denmark, tuition was provided by school teachers, all of whom were men. Coordination was carried out by a woman in both cases.

d) Recruitment

In Denmark, the unions were involved in the recruitment process. In Greece, the selection criteria were much more stringent than for men drivers: educational background (three years longer than for men), motivation, dynamism,

age, tests and interviews.

e) Results

In Denmark, 15 out of 22 women passed the course. In Greece, 75 % of the women passed the first and 25 % the second examination.

2. RETRAINING / (RE)SKILLING PROGRAMMES

Retraining/(re)skilling programmes can be divided into the following sub-categories:

- training programmes for operatives and/or technicians;
- training programmes in the tertiary sector;
- highly specialized training programmes (new technologies, engineering).

Following examination of the evaluation reports, it has been observed that the training programmes for operatives and in the tertiary sector basically have the same characteristics, although the former lead to traditionally masculine jobs and the latter leave women in traditionally female clerical posts. This similarity undoubtedly stems from the fact that the two training programmes studied in the tertiary sector were combined with technical training courses in the same company.

We have therefore decided to present them here in the same

category.

2.1. Technical and tertiary training programmes

The following technical training programmes were organized:

- in Spain:
  - training in quality planning and management;

- in France:
  - training of automated machinery operators;
  - training in automated systems maintenance.

The following tertiary training programmes were offered:

- in Germany:
  - specialization courses for secretaries in economics and management, marketing and human resources;
- in France:
  - accountancy and secretarial skills.

a) General characteristics

These training programmes generally catered for women aged 30+ with a number of years of in-company service. The number of women trained did not exceed approximately 50. The courses, ranging from three months to three years in length, were generally implemented on company premises on a full-time or part-time basis. Sometimes (e.g. France),

parts of the course took place in a school. All the technical training programmes and the French accountancy course led to a recognized diploma. In Germany, the qualification was only recognized within the company. The programmes were co-funded by the public authorities in the three Member States. Finally, these training programmes were all "women-only".

b) Training objectives

The objectives mentioned in the evaluation reports essentially refer to skilling/reskilling.

Example:

In Spain, the objective was to provide staff with continuation training of a technical nature to create a dynamic and interdepartmental team with a better degree of vocational preparation.

In France, among others, women were to receive quality production training within the framework of a process of multi-skilling.

c) Training programme implementation and players

There were frequently numerous players involved in these actions, e.g. company management, public authorities, trade unions, training agencies, institutes of higher education, works counsellors, external agencies such as

the "Association Retravailler", promoting the vocational reintegration of women, or the "Fonds Assurance Formation" of the "Coopération Agricole", promoting training in the field of agriculture, in France.

d) Recruitment

In France, the criteria were motivation, dynamism, school education and a basic diploma. In Spain, quality control was already a field characterized by a majority of women. All the women were accepted for the training scheme. No information on this subject is available for Germany.

e) Content and method

As far as Germany is concerned, all the information we have at our disposal is that the theoretical and practical courses were implemented by the in-company training team in collaboration with independent vocational training agencies.

In Spain, the programme comprised two elements:

- technical training: statistics, percentages, graphs, establishment of quality criteria;

- "human" training: transactional analysis, relational psychology, specifically women's problems.

In France, the training programme was also a combination

of theoretical and practical courses, with however a very strong leaning toward the school model.

f) Results

In Spain, the results mentioned by the report are above all of a qualitative nature:

- deeper technical know-how;
- a sense of responsibility;
- an improvement of the working climate;
- self-assurance, autonomy;
- cohesion;
- ...

In Germany, the following results were observed:

- a better working climate;
- confidence;
- a balance and tolerance between the two sexes.

Neither the Spanish nor the German cases quoted precise figures. In France, in contrast, as well as the qualitative evaluation, we know that in one firm 22 out of 24 women obtained the diploma. However, in another, 16 out of 42 women opted out of the training course.

The evaluators give the following reasons to explain why these women left the course:

- difficulties in appreciating career opportunities;
- the length of the course;
- no change in working conditions during productive periods;
- pressure from the management;
- the resistance of the women themselves to this training programme, imposed upon them despite their attempts to define their own career plans.

2.2 High-level training programmes

Only two of the programmes were specifically aimed at providing women with a high-level qualification, i.e. offering women access to high-level technical management positions:

- in Germany: specialization course in installation electronics;
- in the United Kingdom: bridging course in telecommunications and information technology.

a) General characteristics

The two programmes in question were longer-term schemes (2 1/2 and 36 weeks plus universities), reserved for small groups (5-18) of young women aged 20-25. The courses, which were full-time programmes, were implemented in a school (college) and sometimes at the company training centre. In Germany, the training programme was subsidized by the Ministry of Employment and the students received a

loan from the firm. In the U.K., the company paid the trainees' salaries plus a subsistence allowance.

b) Objectives

For the German company, the aim was to counteract a shortage of skilled personnel and to lead one out of every 50 female employees to a managerial position. In the United Kingdom, the objective was to find alternative sources of in-company recruitment to contend with a reduction of the technical male workforce.

c) Training programme implementation and players

Since the schemes in question were high-level training programmes, universities contributed in their elaboration. The training teams were essentially comprised of male teaching staff specialized in the various fields of study.

d) Recruitment

The German report does not provide any information on this subject. In the U.K., however, the selection process was very rigorous, involving:

- interviews with the candidates conducted by their heads of department to evaluate their aptitudes;
- aptitude tests;
- interviews to evaluate candidates' personal skills conducted by a jury at the local departmental level;

- final interviews conducted by the company management.

e) Results

No information is available on the number of women who passed or dropped out of the German course. Since the British course has not finished yet, its results cannot be evaluated. However 12 out of 21 women have already dropped out of the programme...

3. PROMOTION/DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

The training programmes classified under this heading are actions whose main objective is to prepare women for a management job. They can be found:

- in Denmark:
  - "Management, is it for me?" (DK 1);
  - career opportunities for women in clerical posts (DK 2);

- in Ireland:
  - "Planning ahead with confidence";

- in the United Kingdom:
  - management training for women (UK 1);
  - development course for women (UK 2).

3.1. General characteristics

These training programmes have the traditional characteristics of company seminars for managers. They are short-term courses (2-7 days), generally implemented at a location chosen by the firm or the consultancy agency involved (hotel, training centre, etc.). The groups vary in size (10-25) and the courses are repeated to reach a higher number of women (50-200).

The age of the women participants varies from programme to programme. In Denmark, no age bracket is stipulated, whereas in the United Kingdom (UK 2) and Ireland, the target group is composed of the under-30s.

Although these seminars do not lead to officially recognized diplomas, participation is recognized by the companies in question; in Denmark, e.g., the course is regarded as indispensable for access to a management post.

Three out of five companies (DK 1, UK 1 and UK 2) assume the total costs of the training courses themselves. The Irish project is supported by national public funding; DK 2 is part of a European Commission programme.

3.2. Training objectives

The objectives mentioned by the evaluators include both the personal development of the women and the acquisition of management skills. In Denmark (DK 1), e.g., the aim was

to identify the women's ambitions in relation with deployment of their personal resources on behalf of the company. In DK 2, the emphasis was on the reduction of personal barriers to the definition of a career plan within the company. In the U.K. (UK 1), it was also a question of developing women's sense of efficiency and authority. At the end of the training programme, the women were to be able to analyse organizational and personal environments, to establish career strategies, to explore development networks, etc.

The evaluation reports indicate clear-cut objectives on the part of the firms. In Denmark (DK 2), the aim was to increase women's mobility within the organization. In Ireland, the following objectives are mentioned: to retain the experienced workforce following marriage and childbirth, to plan management positions within the company, to discover and utilize the management potential of the staff, etc. In the U.K., the aims were to promote the advancement of female middle management towards upper management and to develop the skills and practices of current management staff (UK 1).

3.3 Training programme implementation and players

These programmes are generally initiated by the companies, in liaison with a training agency, e.g. the department of labour psychology of the Danish Institute for Technology or the Pepperell unit, specialized in training courses for women, for the implementation of the courses. Active

involvement of women can also generally be observed in the decision-making process, either at the level of initiation, coordination or teaching.

3.4. Content and methods

The following contents were covered by all the training programmes:

- personal presentation;
- negotiation/conflict;
- communication;
- authority and awareness;
- work organization;
- time management;
- problem-solving;
- corporate and management culture;
- ...

As far as personal development is concerned, the contents, more specifically, were as follows:

- women at work;
- health;
- career planning.

The methods used were:

- work in groups;
- plenary sessions;

- lectures;
- role play;
- individual activities.

3.5. Selection

In some cases selection was virtually inexistent, e.g. in UK 1, participation was open to anyone at the appropriate grade, the only condition being that candidates were sponsored by their corresponding departments; participation was decided by the head of section. Recruitment was above of a word-to-mouth nature (80-90 %).

In other cases, the selection procedure was more exacting. In UK 2, the women were recruited on the basis of very strict criteria relating to age, years of service, diplomas, and personality (high potential, ambitious, enthusiastic, the wish to develop both themselves and their organization, etc.). 200 written applications were examined and the short-listed candidates were then selected by interview. Only 30 women are chosen for the course per year.

It should be pointed out that this training course, organized by a company, was open to female employees from other firms. Although the organizing company confirmed its wish to associate itself with equal opportunities initiatives and portray a woman-friendly image, only 6 women were chosen from its own staff; it has thus "cut its risks" to a maximum, to put it mildly.

3.6. Results

Given the short duration of these programmes, no data are available on drop-outs. Similarly, since there was generally no examination at the end of these schemes, it is difficult to discuss their success.

The comments made in the evaluation reports nevertheless all mention qualitative results such as:

- a change in the women's behaviour;
- a higher degree of authority;
- better planning of action;
- better acceptance of criticism;
- ...

These evaluations are naturally completely subjective and impossible to gauge within the framework of this research.

4. SUMMARY TABLE

	PROGRAMMES				
	INSERTION - TRAINING PRIOR TO RECRUITMENT		RETRAINING RESKILLING		PROMOTION/DEVELOPMENT/ MANAGEMENT
	YOUNG WOMEN	WOMEN JOB-SEEKERS	TECHNICAL/ TERTIARY	TOP LEVEL QUALIFICATION	
MEMBER STATE	Germany Belgium	Denmark Greece	Germany Spain France	Germany	Denmark Ireland United Kingdom
TARGET GROUP					
- age	16-21	20 +	+/- 30	20-25	variable
- years of service	none	none	several	in-company	in-company
- sex	mixed	women	women	women	women
- no. of women	5 or 6, 10 % of total	14-100	(50	5-18	in groups of 10-25
- qualification	non-	low	low	middle	upper middle
- recruitment	selection	selection	selection (except Spain)	severe selection	no selection - severe selection
LENGTH OF TRAINING	2-3 yrs.	11-47 weeks	3 months - 3 years	2 1/2 yrs.	2-7 days
LOCATION	Alternance school/ company	Alternance school/ company	School/ company (not alternance)	Training centre + college	Hotel, seminar centre
PROMOTER	Public initiative	Public initiative	Public initiative	The company	The company + training agency
OBJECTIVE	To counteract a shortage of skilled labour	Access for women to new qualifications	Training/ retraining for women	To lead women to supervisory + highly technically skilled positions	Personal development Management skills In-company mobility
QUALIFICATION OBTAINED	Recognized certificate	Certificate recognized by employers	Certificate recognized by the company	Certificate recognized by the company + college	No certificate. Recognition of participation by the company
TRAINERS	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male + Female

CHAPTER IV
THE IMPACT OF THE POSITIVE ACTIONS

INTRODUCTION

For various reasons - related to the modalities and circumstances of national evaluation and the difficulty in constituting pertinent evaluation indicators - the impact of the training programmes on the organizations is extremely difficult to gauge.

Difficulties related to national evaluation modalities:

Most of the training programmes were in the course of implementation or approaching completion at the time of evaluation. It was therefore too early to evaluate their effects on the organization in question. The French examples implemented from 1983 tend to show that the impact of the training programmes only begins to emerge 2-3 years after the event. A number of hypotheses can nevertheless be formulated on the basis of the preliminary comments made in the reports.

The ratio of women trainees as a function of the overall staff complement of the firms is generally too low for the measures to have a quantifiable effect, especially if the women concerned have a marginal status (e.g. the Belgian apprentices) or represent an insignificant category within the firm (e.g. the women engineers in the U.K.).

The objectives of the programmes are so diverse that any comparison tends to lack credibility. Their impact on the organization varies according to the aims: insertion of

young women, job diversification, skilling, quality development, access to management, image policy, etc. cannot be appreciated in the same way. Finally, the programmes are more suited to intrinsic evaluation than comparison.

Difficulties linked to the choice of indicators

The companies rarely quantified the expected results and when they did so, the numbers of the trained women were under-representative. Moreover, the firms were not committed to changing employment conditions for women in terms which would be quantifiable following the training programmes.

The choice of qualitative indicators is no easier. It is in fact more difficult to define the impact on the working climate, relations between members of staff, changes in corporate culture, etc. It is therefore necessary to clearly define the indicators set and to perceive their limits.

It is also necessary to attach as much attention as possible to indirect or inferred effects upstream or downstream of the training programme, to compare the intended effects with those actually obtained, the effects announced and those actually achieved, as well as positive, negative and perverse effects!

With due account to all these restrictions, we have

attempted to put forward a number of reflections on the impact of the various programmes on the organizations in which they were implemented.

We have used Rousselet's grid of efficiency indicators for the evaluation of in-company training schemes[1] to structure the following chapter. In accordance with this grid, we shall first of all present the impact of the training schemes on the women, secondly the change in mentality and personal development and finally on the companies themselves.

1. THE IMPACT OF THE POSITIVE TRAINING ACTIONS ON THE WOMEN

1.1. Impact on the development of the position of women in continuing vocational training

At this point it is necessary to recall the character of these actions, which we are tempted to qualify as experimental on account of the small proportion of women actually involved in the training schemes in question - 0.004 % of salaried employees in the case of large-scale businesses with a number of locations distributed over the national territory and 5 % in the case of single-location companies with a workforce in the 300 - 700 range.

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1) Rousselet, S., Evaluation des Actions Positives de formation en entreprise, expérimentation d'une méthodologie de mise en évidence d'indicateurs d'efficacité, Degree Dissertation, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Liège, 1990.

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However, the low quantitative impact of such actions should not conceal their innovative character and the traces they may leave in the memory and the structures of the firm, especially long-term types of scheme leading to a qualification.

From this point of view, the socio-technical characteristics of the firms (products, work organization, workforce skill structure) largely determine the traditions of job and training management and, as a result, the more or less innovative character of such actions to promote women's access to in-company vocational training.

It can therefore be maintained that in "workforce" industries, where production processes remained largely unautomated until recently and skill structures were highly bipolarized between unskilled female production workers, on the one hand, and male professional maintenance workers monopolizing all the in-company technical training schemes, on the other, positive actions have initiated a new process with a powerful impact on the social practices and perceptions of company players.

There is clearly no automatic relationship between positive actions and the long-term penetration of women into the field of vocational training in their company. A number of years of hindsight will undoubtedly be necessary to assess whether these new practices are reproduced and perpetuated.

Moreover, to bring this hypothesis into perspective, it should also be noted that the intervention of corporate culture may alter the direction of this gender-based polarization of training and jobs. In this case, the occupation of skilled jobs by women is generally accompanied by the presence of vocational training in the firm and the impact of the positive action may be relatively insignificant if only a handful of women actually receive training.

In contrast, firms with a high potential of "grey matter" generally have a strong tradition in the field of vocational training which is also beneficial to women. However a functional polarization between technical and administrative jobs appears at this level. The reestablishment of an equilibrium therefore requires heavy investment in training to re-channel the administrative female workers towards high-level technical jobs. If the positive action has an undoubtedly innovative character, the other side of the coin is always a high degree of selectivity in the recruitment of women trainees and a high drop-out rate in the course of the training scheme.

Furthermore, reconciling training time with family life also seems to constitute a further element of discrimination against women in their access to training programmes. This aspect represents an obstacle to women with parental responsibilities, especially when the training scheme takes place in a residential centre at a relative distance from the family home and no social care

facilities are provided for infant or pre-school children. Accordingly the number of women with dependent children was very low, not only in the long-term training schemes, specifically addressed to such women, but also in short-term personal development courses, some of which exclusively catered for young single women. This question - reconciling investment in occupational and family life - is probably one of the main stumbling blocks of of equal opportunities processes.

Finally, we should like to conclude this section by pointing out the low proportion of women actually selected, compared to the number of candidates; the ratio is not infrequently below 5 %.

1.2. Impact on skills, the certification of competences and promotion

a) Impact of vocational integration programmes

The quantitative impact of these programmes, analysed within the framework of the Belgian report, is extremely low: an average of merely 4 young women were involved per company. Moreover, these young women were a minority in the mixed groups involved in these actions, representing approximately one quarter of the overall numbers, if not less.

Designed as apprenticeship contracts for traditionally male trades, these training programmes lead to recognized

certificates in the collective agreements of the various occupational sectors. Their impact on access to employment, following the apprenticeship contract, depends on how the company integrates these schemes into its job management and its own corporate culture.

In some cases, these schemes offer firms a chance to obtain cheap labour and their committment goes no further. Other firms, in contrast, wish to train their future employees in anticipation of recruitment. If the apprenticeship contract leads to integration as a salaried worker, the adaptation of the training scheme to company needs may be considered more important than transferability of skills to other firms.

The success of vocational integration also depends on both recruitment measures (attachment to a local employment reserve in a rural environment, as opposed to impersonal and rational recruitment measures in an urban context) and the cultural climate of the firm (relations between salaried workers fostering the relational dimension, as opposed to an atmosphere of anonymity promoting the economic competitivity of the company and individual aspirations towards salary increases).

b) Training schemes leading to the specialized worker qualification[2]

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2) The term "specialized worker" ("ouvrière spécialisée") is used in French labour sociology to describe unskilled workers in the manufacturing process produced by Tayloristic labour organization.

The content of these training schemes is defined in close relationship with the needs of the firm, its technologicalinvestment, changes in its production process and the development of the "quality logic". These actions lead to a qualification recognized either by state educational systems or collective agreement. They generally show a good success rate - unless the company in question changes its workforce management strategy midstream, rendering the acquired competences inoperative (as happened in a French metallurgical company).

The pace of change of the women's job situation in the company once they return from the training scheme is extremely varied. In cases involving skill upgrading in already existing jobs, this change may occur almost immediately (e.g. in the case of the control/quality service workers in the Spanish textile company). In contrast, the change may not transpire for at least a year if there is a lack of qualified jobs and the management has to make an effort to create such jobs so that initially only a fraction of the trained women witness a change in their job situation (e.g. the specialized workers in the French agro-food sector).

In general terms, this vocational training process is accompanied by mobility towards more highly skilled jobs, advancement in the classification grids and salary increments, but not always by access to the career ladder.

Moreover, the skilled male workforce may offer resistance to the the process of job restructuring which frequently accompanies women's return to the workplace. Men sometimes wish to keep the technical niches for themselves and try to prevent women from gaining access to these fields in an attempt to preserve the salary and skills hierarchy. Thus in a Danish metallurgical company, the women trained to operate automated machinery found themselves - or let themselves be - left out of the programming of these very machines, although they had acquired the necessary skills.

Finally, situations in which the group of women who have received training is characterized by a high degree of homogeneity in terms of the content of their training and its position within the firm, tend to reinforce their strategic ability to push through and gain recognition for their acquired competences, whereas, in contrast, if the women are dispersed over many different jobs, the establishment of alliances and pressure groups is more difficult.

To conclude this section, we should like to refer to the Greek firm in which the training programme for women bus-drivers (1% of the total bus-driver workforce) had the secondary effect of increasing the recruitment of women by a company whose jobs are very much sought after on account of the salary levels and job stability offered.

Vocational training courses addressed to administrative employees generally led to job enrichment and sometimes

promotions, (e.g. the Danish pharmaceutical company).

c) High-level training courses

The results of the training course for access to engineering jobs can only be perceived as far as the first stages are concerned, i.e. pre-training. These phases do not lead to a qualification, but offer access to higher education and an internal technical training course. The first stage led to 15 women out of a total of 19 being promoted and the second year 9 out of 12. The final stage envisages a retraining course in engineering functions. Since the action is still under way, the results cannot yet be evaluated; however it appears to be extremely selective since 12 of the 21 women recruited have dropped out.

d) Training programmes for personnel development and the acquisition of strategic competences

Even if not explicit, this concern is present in all the training schemes to a greater or lesser degree. Experience of other forms of work organization in in-company courses, combined with the group effect and the acquisition of new technical and social skills tends to facilitate the elaboration of individual and collective strategies to conquer new social roles and an increased awareness.

This element constitutes a specific training action for women with the vocational qualifications for access to

managerial positions whose careers have come to a dead end. These short-term actions reach a larger number of salaried employees (sometimes more than 100 women) and although they do not lead to a recognized certificate, they promote mobilization and reinforce potential competences. Such courses are often dramatic psycho-social actions since they question the occupational and personal culture of the participants, confronting their own culture with that of the organization, and help women to discover the social and psycho-individual mechanisms which are blocking their careers.

This element focuses on the evaluation and project approach, with the definition of a career plan and the constitution of occupational networks as a support mechanism for individual promotion strategies. It produces a powerful dynamization of the women, but its transformation into occupational success evidently depends on the degree to which the working environment is permeable to the question of equal opportunities. Moreover it is rather difficult to appreciate the actual role of these actions in subsequent promotions.

1.3. Impact on women's behaviour and attitudes towards work

Despite the low number of young women involved, the training actions aimed at vocational insertion offer a real opportunity for young people with negative school careers, especially in cases of strong firm/school/family

partnerships. This is even more true in cases in which the firm develops "community-type" links with its employment pool (the weight of parental networks, spatial and social proximity in recruitment practices).

These actions have also raised young women's awareness of the "training challenge" as a fundamental parameter of modern society which calls for an ongoing adaptability to change.

The training courses leading to specialized worker qualifications offered openings to women whose occupational horizons had reached a dead end; the women acquired an increased awareness as professionals, of negotiating areas, actions and relations and found a pilot position in the context of new working organizations and standards. However these courses also triggered risks of considerable frustration if acquired competences failed to be updated or trends towards the restructuring of sexual hierarchies emerged.

The courses leading to managerial posts also had a highly motivating and mobilizing effect, giving women an impression that they had reached a turning point in their careers; however here again effectiveness depends on the climate of the environment.

1.4. Impact on changes in mentality and personnel development

This section shall be much briefer than the previous one since our approach - which is to focus on the processes, rather than on quantifiable facts - makes it relatively difficult to disassociate questions of personnel development from occupational success, all the more so since some positive actions are explicitly focused on personnel development courses.

All the national monographs have emphasized the considerable impact of such actions on the women in terms of self-confidence, autonomy and independence. Given the rigorous selection necessary on account of the imbalance between the number of would-be trainees and available places, there is every reason to believe that the women concerned were already endowed with these characteristics beforehand. This means that there was probably a fairly good match between their culture and the question of positive actions, which explains the support received by the majority of the women from their spouses and extended families. Judging from the information in the monographs, apart from short-term changes to reconcile the training situation with family life, the positive actions do not seem to have left any significant impact on previous domestic organization. In most cases, the women had to manage child-care problems themselves, relying on their personal resources, without any social back-up measures being offered by the firm. Few married women with children

thus participated in longer term training schemes implemented at a considerable distance from their family homes.

The information in the national reports does not permit any further progress in the analysis of the means of reconciling family and occupational life and the effects of the positive actions on these relations. The impression which emerges, and which can be expressed in the form of an hypothesis, is that this factor constitutes a central element of inequality of opportunity in working life. Women integrate - undoubtedly diversely - as a function of their socio-occupational milieu, their specific role as a regulating agent and as a buffer between the two arenas. In our opinion, to remove the social debate on this question and the ways of solving this problem from the occupational field to the private sphere, is to create a platform for unequal relations between the two sexes.

2. THE IMPACT OF POSITIVE TRAINING ACTIONS ON THE FIRMS

2.1. Impact on the productivity of the organizations

Insofar as the training schemes have upgraded the vocational and personnel skills of the women, the long-term result should be an increase in productivity for the firms. Better trained and more motivated, women will be better workers, will invest more in their work and their output will be bigger and better. It should nevertheless be noted that for the advantages to be visible for the firms, a considerable number of women must receive

training; moreover, upon completion of their training they must receive promotion, otherwise they will develop a sense of frustration and disappointment which will undermine the expected gains.

The existence of relations between training and work productivity is now an established fact. These relations are established at the end of a long and complex process of mediation which deserves meticulous evaluation by the firms. However most of the national reports indicate that the surveyed firms had not envisaged any internal evaluation and did not really know how to go about it. It should be nevertheless be noted that in a few rare exceptions the firms had already appointed an equal opportunities officer. In these cases, the firm had more precise information on the role of the women and a clearer definition and schedule of the objectives to be achieved (e.g. Denmark).

2.2. Impact on personnel management

Since the majority of the programmes did not include any commitment to the promotion or recruitment of the women to specific jobs other than in very vague and uncommittal terms, it is rarely possible to establish ratios between "before" and "after". The hypothesis can nevertheless be advanced that for a woman in a given firm, participation in an equal opportunities programme increases the prospects of a positive development of her working conditions. However this can not be affirmed with certainty when the

specific economic and social circumstances of the firm are the determining factors. Very often when changes take place, they occur slowly and gradually (e.g. France, Spain, Greece).

Over and above this, has there been a change in the methods of female workforce management in the firms? Here again it is difficult to give a definite answer. It seems that personnel managers or officers who are convinced of the advantage the organization will gain from the training programme for women from the outset are even more convinced of this following the schemes. But is this enough to trigger off a significant change in the management of employment?

2.3. Cultural impact

Most national reports point out that the trained women constituted a group of solidarity in the course of their training. The question therefore is, what will be the capacity of these groups in the long term to break down the dominant masculine cultures and change the preceptions of work for women? Here again the number of women who actually receive training will be a decisive factor!

Attitude of the environment: many reports indicate that the behaviour of the intermediate hierarchy (often men) is a determining factor in facilitating the recognition of the new skills acquired by the women. The reason is that this group is situated directly above the women in the

company hierarchy so that they feel the most threatened in their positions of authority by the participation of women in training programmes which may lead them into managerial positions. The organizations have nevertheless not tried to integrate them into the positive actions to contain their socio-cultural resistance.

Attitude of the unions: although the trade unions supported the programmes in the majority of cases, the authors of the evaluation reports nevertheless stress that their involvement was not very active. In Italy, however, the trade unions seem to have been more actively involved in the initiation process of the programmes. The Italian report notes that "equal opportunities culture has made inroads into the Italian trade unions, translated by numerous clauses in collective agreements".

Over and above this specific example, most of the national reports indicate that the trade unions limited their activities in this field to the expression of ormal positions expressed through the intermediary of institutions representing the staff or negotiating bodies on which they are normally represented.

Image effect: For many organizations positive actions are a vehicle of image policy: companies try to demonstrate how up-to-date they are by their capacity to accept new relations for women at work and implement social innovation. In some cases, this is expressed by a considerable degree of publicity hype around the project.

The reports stress that this information was usually designed for the outside world (other firms, public opinion, local or national authorities), rather than for the internal players within the company. The publicity campaign thus tended to function more as a measure of corporate image promotion than as an instrument of internal legitimation vis-à-vis the overall workforce.

In some cases, the input was considerable (Belgium. U.K.) and the evaluators note the disparity between the intentions proclaimed and the results actually obtained. The information process was tantamount to a press campaign when national or local public authorities sponsored the actions or the project received EEC funding.

While accepting the advantage of such press campaigns for the recognition of positive actions, it may nevertheless be regretted that the internal information effort was not more wide-ranging - today internal communication constitutes a fundamental vector of the evolution of the corporate value system and the dessemination of ideas.

Social policy effect: very difficult to gauge for the above-mentioned reasons. It nevertheless seems possible to affirm that the impact on the social policies of the firms will only be significant and perceiveable if the training programmes are repeated over a number of years and are brought out of their experimental closet! Few companies seem to be firmly committed to repeating the experiments and making them general practice.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS

1. THE DEFINITION OF POSITIVE ACTION

1.1. The lack of transparency of texts and national policies

As shown in Chapter I, positive actions are legal techniques used by international law to reach the objective of equality of the sexes. The outcome of this legislation in terms of a definition of positive action can be listed as follows:

Positive action consists of a set of measures with the aim of creating opportunities for a change in the social condition of women.

Positive action lays down temporary intervention to promote women, either in the framework of legislative channels (BELGIUM, DENMARK, U.K., FRANCE, GREECE), collective agreements (ITALY, GERMANY, SPAIN), or a combination of both (FRANCE, DENMARK).

Positive action may involve the allocation of state subsidies to serve as an incentive (FRANCE).

Positive action designates a general framework of action: employment, training, career advancement, working conditions.

Positive action affects the following target groups: women at work or in the transition to employment, in particular

those faced with a de facto situation of inequality.

Positive action is based on an orientation, explicitly advocated by Community legislators, which consists of the elimination of the socio-occupational disparities between men and women.

Finally, positive action is implicitly based on the failure of formal equal opportunities policies and latently postulates that a provisional phase of unequal treatment is necessary if equal opportunities are really to be achieved.

However legislation on positive action does not offer a definition of the content of positive action in terms of its concrete results, and even less in terms of its sociologically understandable reality.

The aim of the study was not primarily to evaluate the behaviour of EC Member States in the implementation of positive actions. In the light of the preceding chapters, it should not be forgotten that the objectives of national public authorities aimed at developing equal opportunities strategies may be accompanied by latent or discreet objectives, e.g.:

- to combat population decline by improving family management by women in the framework of positive action;

- to skill the female workforce as a means of guaranteeing internal economic and social cohesion;

- to combat unemployment by guaranteeing the success of employment policies.

Expert analysists of public policies are adamant in stressing the ambivalence of public policies which set themselves various targets so that the state will not be judged and evaluated on one level alone. This ambivalence of objectives is manifested by a permanent fluctuation in some Member States between the integration of positive actions into overall employment policies (e.g. the position currently prevalent in France) and the elaboration of specific policies (the position predominant in France between 1983 and 1986). In other circumstances, it may take the form of parallel interventions in the field of equal opportunities at work and family policies (the German case seems to be a prime example of this fluctation).

1.2. A grass-roots definition

The lack of transparency and ambivalence of the texts and policies force analysists to perceive the content of the positive action at grass-roots level.

As observed in the context of the study, the positive actions implemented in the various Member States and firms were extremely diverse. We therefore propose to define the

term "positive training action" in its broadest sense as an activity involving guidance, insertion, access to employment, retraining, reskilling, promotion and the development and preparation of women for management functions in the occupational sphere.

This definition would not be complete without reference to the roles of the various social players, and more specifically the predominance of the firms, external and internal support mechanisms and, naturally, the women themselves.

1.3. Possible typologies

Even a definition at grass-roots level cannot reflect the entire complexity of observed situations alone. A more detailed and analytical approach permits classification according to different criteria. The result is category systems which may intersect. A number of classifications have already been proposed in this report.

a) As a function of the context

The first classification identified positive actions as a function of their context (see Chapter I):

- positive actions within a political context of promotion of equal opportunities thanks to the existence of specific legislation and/or promoting agencies;

- positive actions implemented by isolated players (firms, unions, associations, ...) in a context in which there is no support from either legislation or agencies.

The evaluations of these two groups of actions permit the hypothesis that the latter tend to be more sporadic and non-transferable in nature than the former; they appear to be more strictly related to the solution of specific company problems.

b) As a function of their terms of reference

Another typology proposed in this report classifies positive actions as a function of their terms of reference (see Chapter II).

- the first generation of positive actions corresponding to the Commission's equal opportunities programme of the years 1980-1985 was situated in a context of an approach aimed at women's emancipation and the development of an equal opportunities culture. These actions essentially targeted weak socio-occupational sub-groups of the female workforce;

- the second generation - corresponding to the second and third programmes - were situated in a context of an approach related to human resources management and, more specifically, the female workforce in

upper-middle socio-occupational sub-groups.

Important questions arise from this development in the terms of reference.

Are the objectives of Community and national texts with respect to the management of human resources really the offshoot of a development of policies, and, if so, what direction has this development taken? Or is it a question of an "ex-post" reappropriation by the public authorities of terms of reference dominant in European society, i.e. the firm and human resources management?

Are these changes not the result of a devitalization of equal opportunities strategies in public policies? Are they not condemned to fall in line with the dominant terms of reference if they are to survive?

Are we not observing a type of instrumentalization of positive actions in favour of the upgrading of the workforce, whereby sex as a determining factor of positive actions is no longer the driving force, but merely a descriptive variable of the action?

If this development is confirmed, the results generated by this approach will have to be measured. And the question evaluations must ask in the future would then become the following: is the alliance between equal opportunities strategies and the question of human resources in a position to bridge the gaps between women and men in the

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long term and will this alliance really lead to a transformation of social relations between the sexes?

c) <u>As a function of the type of firm</u>

A third useful classification relates to the type of firm implementing the actions.

Positive actions may be implemented:

- by public state administrations at regional or local authority level;
- by public enterprises or nationalized companies;
- by private industry.

An attempt to seek the analogies and differences between these three categories on the basis of the national analyses suggests that the divergences are above all to be found in the field of the publicity process surrounding the actions.

In public administrations and undertakings, the intention of "lending a helping hand to the women" is given large-scale media coverage, sometimes with the support of the EEC (Ireland and Belgium). This may go as far as the orchestration of a press campaign directed towards national or local public opinion. In this case, the symbolic function of the actions is fulfilled to a maximum.

For the "state in action", it is a matter of demonstrating

to public opinion that it is capable of extending equal opportunities for women and, in so doing, it sends out a signal that it has taken note of the changes which have taken place in women's relations at work. It establishes, to a certain degree, its image as a MODERN STATE via the organizations which habitually constitute the test laboratories for its social policies.

In the field of private enterprise, the approach is much more pragmatic and empirical, the media factor much weaker, the speeches much less numerous or more limited to a more limited circle of players/partners. These comments undoubtedly need to be brought into perspective as a function of the size of the firm in question. The media behaviour of large-scale firms is undoubtedly closer to that of public-sector organizations, as underlined by the British report with reference to a large-scale company.

Beyond this distinction, numerous analogies may be drawn between the actions. These analogies have led to the identification of certain conditions at the level of the emergence of programmes, a number of key facilitating elements and, finally, factors with a detrimental effect on the success of positive actions.

2. CONDITIONS AT THE LEVEL OF EMERGENCE AND FACILITATING ELEMENTS

The emergence of positive actions presupposes the following conditions:

- the presence on the national and/or local labour market of a combination of circumstances determining a labour shortage (unskilled or skilled workers);
- the existence at national or local level of a climate propitious to the development of female employment;
- the introduction of new technologies in the firm, implying a change in productive and administrative processes;
- a shift of the enterprise towards the tertiary sector, a process necessitating the deployment and retraining of in-company personnel. In this case, the female workforce tends to be upgraded and integrated into training circuits;
- the presence of a corporate culture attentive to human resource management;
- a convergence of interests between the social players who have to enter into a process of concertation for the action to emerge.

Having considered conditions at the level of their emergence, the following elements may be considered as facilitators of positive actions:

- the presence of Community policies and directives stimulating and accelerating national policies. Networks such as IRIS and, more recently, NOW exert constant pressure on national policy;

- the presence of internal and/or external support

mechanisms acting as stimuli to positive action;

- a privileged position of internal and external support mechanisms in the ambient political sphere increases their chances of being understood within the firm;

- the establishment of mixed groups (firms, unions, trainers, organizational analysts,...) carrying out important quality control functions of the actions.

3. NEGATIVE FACTORS

The various positive actions observed came up against limits which to a certain extent reduced their success.

These negative factors can be summarized as follows:

- the actions were generally conducted without any real programming in mind. They were virtually never preceded by preliminary studies on their organization, the projected analysis of desired changes or analysis of the needs of the women and the firm, a clear definition of objectives and, finally, the evaluation of their impact;

- there was no guarantee of the dissemination of information on the positive action, either by the promoters towards the women or by the women themselves vis-à-vis their colleagues;

- management staff were not directly involved in the action and were therefore not the allies of the women receiving training;

- time constraints, the low numbers of women involved and the limited objectives of the actions did not lead to a more wide-ranging process and failed even to stimulate the wish for a more profound change;

- the links between training and a change in the women's work situation were scarcely visible. Changes were generally very slow (if not inexistent) and produced a certain degree of frustration among the women;

- the dispersion of the groups of trained women failed to make the actions adequately visible in the firms.

4. RESULTS ACTUALLY GENERATED BY THE POSITIVE ACTIONS

Having examined the preconditions, facilitating elements and negative factors, let us now turn to the results actually generated by the positive actions.

On the basis of the analyses in Chapter IV, it can be concluded that the effects produced by the positive actions are:

- neither those advocated by the policymakers (EEC and Member States), i.e. to bring about a social change

by reducing the gaps between men and women. This by no means implies that parity between the sexes was not improved in certain cases; but the reductions in the gaps between men and women affect such insignificant numbers that they cannot be considered as the forerunners of significantly quantifiable social change;

- nor those sought by the (public or private) organizations, i.e. to comply with needs at the level of insertion, skilling, the adaptation of their female workforce, insofar as the actions were limited to training, without any systematic provision or targeting of their impact on employment;

- nor the results expected by the women, i.e. benefits resulting from an improvement in their employment situations, since the few women who received training were not automatically promoted or did not observe any change in their personal careers.

Does this imply that the positive actions did not produce any results at all? Analysis shows that the progress made is to be found elsewhere.

4.1. Positive actions have gained in content: training

The "training" response was predominant in all the positive actions observed. In fact, a broad consensus seems to be emerging on this content. And by lending its

financial and political support, the initators (EEC, Member States) participate in its institutionalization.

Nevertheless, this content is not neutral. It indeed implicitly postulates that the inequalities to be corrected can be traced back to a training lag among women. It also postulates that training could bridge the gaps and trigger off the expected social change. Nothing could be less certain! Moreover, does this content not correspond more closely to the economic needs of the firms than to those of the women (nevertheless identified as the target group of the actions)? And, as far as women are concerned, is training not becoming the obligatory door to be knocked on if they wish to benefit from positive actions? There are a whole string of questions to be raised with respect to the future of positive actions!

4.2. Equal opportunities policy has gained a new sense of legitimacy

By making inroads into the firms via training channels, equal opportunities policy has lost its ideological dimension and donned the attire of human resources management. Its vocabulary has embraced that of the upgrading of potential and the optimization of human capital. It comes back to the public authorities with the rubber stamp of the enterprise, giving a new degree of credibility to governmental action.

Credibility among female opinion: the modern state has

taken note of the changes which have occurred in female employment. It is developing a service with the firms as a go-between.

Credibility among the firms: the state has decreed the firm as a training location and a privileged area of society's debate on equality of the sexes. It has not sinned by ingratitude, since in return for this transfer from the macro- to the micro-social level, it has made its network of experts available to the firms, financed preliminary studies, pressed its agents to assist in their implementation, participated in the funding of the training schemes...

Political credibility: by changing their "look", positive actions justify their perpetuation by the MEMBER STATES and the EEC. They have gained in capacity of persuasion!

4.3. Women have gained in occupational visibility

The pointers of the national reports indicate that one of the effects of the training programmes has been to sharpen the visibility of women within the organizations.

The origin of this visibility must, it seems, be sought at the level of the social dynamics generated by the training programmes (the activation of the women, the attention devoted to them, the establishment of groups of trained women, development of their strategic capacities).

What seems to contribute to this result? It would seem that training programmes contribute to the visibility of women as fully-fledged professionals, thus helping to reduce traditional perceptions of women as wives and mothers.

It seems that the training dynamics implemented and addressed to a handful of women promotes a better knowledge of female employment, the principle of reality thus gaining ground over stereotyping. An indication of this change would be if the organizations tended to question their role in the production of differences at the end of the training courses. However, there is no reason to believe that positive actions will have an exponential growth at these locations, or that the social change announced by the regulators will take place at this level.

5. SOME GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF POSITIVE ACTIONS

We shall conclude this report with a number of recommendations for the key actors identified in the report for the future development of positive actions.

Recommendations for the firms:

- a greater awareness of human resources should be developed by introducing into the organization new forms of flexibility, e.g. the introduction of ad

- hoc career management measures, job-sharing, flexible working hours, return to work after career breaks, relations with training networks, etc.;

- the management and all other employees should be involved in the action;

- work groups, new arrangements for information circulation and decision-making processes should be introduced;

- systematic information should be organized, both inside and outside the firms, on any measures envisaged and implemented in the field of equal opportunites;

- positive actions should be transformed from experimental, quota-based approaches into a genuine company internal management policy based on the upgrading of female resources.

Recommendations for women:

- women should become aware that they constitute genuine resources, not merely the weaker segment of the workforce;

- women should grasp the importance of training and fulfill their role as multipliers both inside and outside the firms to succeed in counteracting

preconceived misconceptions of their abilities;

- women should avoid adopting male role models and should develop their own abilities to plan their personnel and career plans.

Recommendations for trade unions:

- problems linked to situations of discrimination should be transferred to points of direct negotation;

- more precise contractual instruments should be acquired and a new approach to positive actions adopted in the long-term.

Recommendations for institutions:

- implementation of new rules and arrangements governing the implementation of positive actions;

- provision of delegation to the local level, taking account of territorial requirements, the needs of the women and the firms, at the same time retaining the role of sponsor and general coordinator.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

CEDEFOP

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

IN-COMPANY VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHEMES FOR WOMEN EVALUATION GUIDELINES

JUNE 1989

INTRODUCTION

In carrying out this evaluation on "Equal Opportunities and Vocational Training", CEDEFOP is endeavouring to learn more about the training schemes organized by companies for their female workforce. The Centre has developed the guidelines following below in order to provide an overall structure for the work to be carried out on this project, which extends to most Member States.

These guidelines specify the type of information to be collected and also the efficiency indicators to be employed in assessing the impact of company training schemes. It specifies nothing, by contrast, with regard to the data collection methodology, all approaches being acceptable provided that all fields of enquiry are covered. Several source persons/groups of persons should be approached to ensure a valid basis for the analysis:

* the relevant management staff, e.g.
  - the personnel manager,
  - the equal opportunities officer,
  - the training manager;
* the trainers;
* trade union and workforce representatives;
* the women trained or being trained;
* male colleagues;
* female colleagues.

In the report, the persons approached should be named

and/or their position (both formal and informal) within the organizational structure indicated. If the necessary information could not otherwise be obtained, the name of the organization and the relevant persons interviewed may be invented.

Guidelines

The guidelines relate to four fields of enquiry:

1. Description of the organization.
2. Description of the training scheme for women.
3. Impact of the training scheme.
4. Evaluation of the analytical data.

The page indications refer to the estimated minimum space envisaged for replies. Since the total report for each case study may number 30 pages, this minimum can be slightly exceeded. The indents listed under each sub-heading indicate the type of information sought in each case, and may be adapted in line with the circumstances of each organization and its training scheme.

1. Description of the organization

1.1. Identity of the organization(s) (1/3 page)

- name of the organization(s) or invented name (please indicate which);
- size of the workforce (approximate number);

- break-down by sex of the workforce;
- legal structure.

1.2. Location (1/3 page)

- address;
- particularities of the location;
- relationship between the organization and its environment (economic, social, other).

1.3. The organization (1/3 page)

- sector of activity/output produced;
- organizational structure (e.g. multinational, branch structure, etc.);

1.4. Structure/organigramme (1 page)

Please draw the structure of the organization with its different staffing components and how they relate to each other.

Please highlight or describe the position of women and men within this structure.

1.5. Constraints (1/2 page)

Constraints facing the organization, e.g.:
- production-related factors;
- market-related factors;

- organizational factors;
- labour-related factors.

1.6. Strategies (1/2 page)

Strategies already being, or to be implemented by the organization, e.g.:
- production-related;
- market-related;
- organizational;
- labour-related strategies.

1.7. What is the situation of women and men in relation to these constraints or strategies? (1/2 page)

1.8. Industrial Relations (2/3 page)

- what is the power distribution within the organization - both formal and informal?;
- what forms of decision-making are used (e.g. hierarchical, democratic)?;
- what is the position of the trade unions? Are there other forms of worker representation?;
- what communications channels are used? Is there a social dialogue with the trade unions?;
- any other relevant factors.

1.9. Working arrangements (2/3 page)

- number of full-time workers by sex;
- number of part-time workers by sex;
- type of part-time arrangements used;
- does the organization use job-sharing?;
- does it use outworkers?;
- does it apply flexible working hours/arrangements?;
- does it give career breaks (and if so, in what circumstances)?;
- if so, what is the uptake of career breaks?;
- does it have or subsidise child-care facilities? If not, are other child-care facilities readily available to its workforce?

1.10. Special characteristics of the workforce (1/3 page)

- over-representation of certain age groups?;
- foreign citizens/ethnic minorities;
- do women tend to leave to raise families?;
- any other special characteristics?

1.11. Vocational training policy (1/3 page)

- general training objectives;
- type of training carried out;
- break-down by sex of participants;
- training opportunities for staff on career breaks?

1.12. Equal opportunities policy (1/3 page)

- does the organization have an equal opportunities policy?;
- does it have an equal opportunities officer or structure?;
- is it running a positive action programme?;
- what, apart from the training course being evaluated, are the other components of this programme?;
- what are the objectives of this programme?;
- is it implementing equal opportunities training for men/women?

2. Description of the training scheme for women

2.1. Basic characteristics (1/2 page)

- title of the training scheme;
- number of trainees;
- location of the training;
- timing of the training/relationship with working hours;
- duration of the training;
- provision of child-care for the trainees' children?

2.2. Skills and career options (1/2 page)

- trainees' skills at the outset;

- new skills to be acquired
- career options to be opened.

2.3. Background (1 page)

- objectives of the training scheme for the organization;
- objectives of the training scheme for the trainees/their motivation;
- initiator of the training scheme/reasons;
- pressure groups involved;
- attitude of the trade unions/workforce representatives;
- outside persons/groups consulted within the organization;
- other persons/groups consulted within the organization;
- key persons involved in defining the objectives and planning the programme (trainers, premises, finance, etc.);
- outline the negotiation that led to the training scheme being set up.

2.4. Implementation (1/3 page)

- awareness-raising and information of the workforce;
- recruitment of trainees: methods and criteria;
  - who made the decisions on the context, methodology, teaching materials and

tools, and how were they made?;
- was the training scheme designed as one-off, to be repeated, or to become permanent?;
- did it lead to a recognized qualification? By whom is the qualification recognized?

2.5. Financing (1/2 page)

- cost of the scheme (lost labour, salaries/expenses of the trainers, cost of premises, materials, child-care, trainees' bonuses, etc.);
- source of finance (trainees, the organization itself, other private sector contributions, other public sector contributions, European Community, etc.);
- are trainees paid for the hours of the course?; do they receive a bonus after completing it?

2.6. Contents of the course (1 page)

2.7. The training team (1/2 page)

- numbers of trainers;
- sex of trainers;
- qualifications;
- position within the organization/within the training body;
- training body involved/other outside advice

or expertise;
- involvement of role models?

2.8. Trainee profile (1/2 page)

- break-down of trainees by sex;
- personal profile of trainees;
- family and social profile;
- educational and occupational profile;
- past history in the organization;
- trainees' skills/talents/experience at the outset;
- negotiations within the trainees' families enabling training to take place.

2.9. Integration of the training course within the organization/within the family (1/2 page)

- organizational changes within the organization to facilitate the course;
- reactions from employees;
- what support measures were found to be necessary - what support measures were implemented?;
- what, if any, were the obstacles threatening a successful conclusion of the training scheme?;
- what were the main factors enabling the course to be concluded successfully?;
- organizational changes within the families to

facilitate trainees' participation in the course.

2.10. Success of the training course (1/3 page)

- participation rate: Were all those recruited to the course able to attend it regularly? If not, why not?

2.11. Results for the organization (1/2 page)

- did the training course bring about the changes in skills required by the organization?;
- did it improve output, productivity, quality of service, profitability, etc.?;
- did it affect the working atmosphere?

2.12. Publicity within/outside the organization (1/3 page)

- internal information;
- publicity campaign;
- press coverage;
- participation in conferences/seminars/ networks;
- others.

3. Impact of the training scheme

3.1. Employment-related change

3.1.1. New skills acquired (1/3 page)

- what new skills were acquired (skills in respect of products, materials, processes, know-how for new occupational fields, etc.)?;
- how do these correspond to the targeted skills (see 2.2. above)?

3.1.2. Changes in job content (1/2 page)

- how many of the trainees have been promoted since the training course, and to what positions?;
- how many of the trainees have taken up different posts? - please explain what posts are involved;
- how many of the trainees have added new skills or responsibilities to their existing posts? Please elaborate;
- how many are continuing in their present, unchanged jobs?
- how many of the trainees have become involved in new voluntary activities at the workplace, trade unions, etc.?;
- how many of them have left the organization to take up job offers elsewhere? What became of them?;
- please estimate what changes have occurred to the trainees' job

satisfaction since the training course. Where relevant, please give some indication of the timing of these developments.

3.1.3. Changes in working conditions (1/2 page)

What changes resulted for the trainees in terms of:

- salary;
- other financial rewards;
- working conditions;
- status in the organization;
- any other respects;

and when did these changes occur?

3.2. Social and strategic skills

3.2.1. New skills acquired (1 page)

- what new social and strategic skills were acquired (consolidation of identity, increase in self-awareness, self-confidence and autonomy)?;
- did the course help participants to develop a stronger individual identity (e.g. in the arrangement and appearance of the workplace, the application of new organizational methods, etc.)?;
- did it help them improve their career

awareness and planning?;
- did it help them improve their assertiveness and negotiating skills?;
- did it help them in their relations with superiors, colleagues and/or subordinates?;
- did the course provide participants with a useful support network?;
- did the course have any unforeseen consequences in terms of new skills and alliances?;
- how long did it take for any of these consequences to become apparent?

3.2.2. Changes in the working atmosphere (1/2 page)

Please desribe the consequences (short-term/long-term) which the acquisition of these new social and strategic skills has had for:

- the trainees themselves in the workplace;
- their female colleagues;
- their male colleagues;
- the trainees' relations with their superiors, colleagues and subordinates;
- their relations with the trade unions or workforce representatives;
- the organization as a whole;
- did the changes made to facilitate their

participation in the course stay in place following the end of the course?

3.2.3. Changes in family life (1/2 page)

Please describe the consequences (short-term/long-term) which the acquisition of these new social and strategic skills has had for:

- the trainees themselves in their family lives;
- the organization and management of their responsibilities at home;
- their relations with their partners;
- their relations with the other members of their families;
- Did the changes made to facilitate their participation in the course stay in place following the end of the course?

3.2.4. Changes in social life (1/2 page)

Please describe the consequences (short-term/long-term) which the acquisition of these new social and strategic skills has had for:

- the trainees themselves in their social lives;
- their relations with friends and

acquaintances;
- their relations with the local and wider community;
- their involvement with voluntary and/or public bodies.

3.3. Company capacity to follow up the training scheme

3.3.1. Accompanying measures during the training period (1/2 page)

- how were the trainees supported and encouraged at work during their training period?;
- did the organization carry out any accompanying measures to sensitize the trainees' colleagues, superiors and subordinates, male or female?;
- What role did the trade unions and/or workforce representatives play vis-à-vis the trainees?;
- did the training course include projects (surveys, evaluations, etc.) to be carried out in the organization?

3.3.2. Follow-up measures (2/3 page)

- what conclusions, apart from those already mentioned, did the organization draw from the training course?;

- did it formally evaluate the training, and if so, how and with what results?;
- what organizational changes, if any, were introduced as a result of the course (e.g. opening up previous male preserves to women, changes in decision-making procedures, redefinition of posts, new promotion procedures, etc.)?;
- what information and awareness-raising measures were taken?;
- what further training, if any, was organized as a result of the training course:
  * in the organization;
  * by or for the trainees themselves (privately or work-related)?

4. Evaluation of the analytical data (1 page)

- who carried out the evaluation? What would you regard as her/his greatest advantages and handicaps as regards this work?;
- what were the main lessons learnt by the evaluator as a result of her/his work?;
- how was access gained to the organization?;
- what persons were approached? What is their position in the organization, and as regards the training scheme? Were they the most suitable persons to involve?;

- what method was used (e.g. interviews, monitoring, etc.)?;
- what were the main difficulties encountered? How could they have been avoided?;
- what help was provided by the evaluation guide drawn up by CEDEFOP?;
- how could the guide be improved?

ANNEX 2

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ANNEX 3

COMPANIES VISITED

Member State	Company name	Sector	Private/ public	Structure of the organization	Staff complement	% women
B	Volvo Europa Parts	European wholesale centre for trade in spare parts for Volvo vehicles	private	Subsidiary of the Swedish group,VOLVO EUROPA TRUCK NV	314	29 %
B	General Motors Continental	Car industry	private	Subsidiary of the American group, GM	10 054	11 %
B	Siemens, Belgium	Electronic + electrical engineering industry	private	Subsidiary of the German multinational	5 000	18 %
B	Samsonite NV	Bag + case industry	private	Subsidiary of the American multinational	923	43 %
DK	Novo-Nordisk Ltd.	Pharmaceutical industry	private	Ltd. coy. -QG in DK, branches worldwide	5 738	46 %
DK	Danish Rail-ways	Transport	public	National organization regionalized QG, Copenhagen	approx. 21 000	17%
DK	Ltd. company 1	Iron/metal Electr. motors	private	Subsidiary of a multi-national	435	40%
DK	Ltd. company 2	Iron/metal	private	Subsidiary of a multi-national	251	28 %
DK	Ltd. company 3	Iron/metal Electr. motors	private	Subsidiary of a multi-national	230	29 %
DK	Ltd. company 4	Iron/metal	private	Subsidiary of a Danish multinational	81	62 %

DK	Ltd. company 5	Iron/metal Elect. motors	private	Subsidiary of a Danish multinational	384	47 %
F	Supermix	Manufacture of textile utensils	private	French-owned	219	14 %
F	Copagro	Foodstuffs	private	Cooperative, part of a group of foodstuff producers		
F	Agrippa	Foodstuffs	private	Cooperative, part of a group of foodstuff producers, similar to Copagro	247	73 %
D	Messerschmidt-Bölkow-Blohm GmbH	Aerospatial technology etc.	private	Limited company, international network	39 886	approx. 16%
UK	Civil Service	Public sector	public	National, 16 different departments	approx. 600 000	5-74 % accord. to level
UK	ESSO UK Ltd.	Petrochemical industry	private	Largest subsidiary of EXXON Corporation, USA	approx. 4 000	approx. 13%
UK	British Telecom	Telecommunication	private/ public	National, regionalized - international cooperation	approx. 23 000	approx. 29%
GR	EAS Ltd.	Athens transport network	private	Ltd. company - Athens bus transport	9 162	3 %
IRL	Gweedore Co.,	Electronic industry	private	Irish-owned		
I	Lanerossi		public/ private		3 020	33 %
I	Italtel	Telecommunications	public	National public service	approx. 7 000 women ? men	
I	Enel	electricity generation and distribution	public	National public service	approx. 10 000 women	approx. 8%
E	Manufacturas Antonio Gassol Ltd.	Textile industry	private	Local Spanish company	702	73 %

CEDEFOP — European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

Equal opportunities and vocational training
Evaluation of in-company vocational training schemes for women

Dina Sensi, SEDEP, université de Liège

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